Amendments to the Claims:

Please cancel claims 30, 33 and 36 without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein and amend the claims as follows.

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1 - 27 (canceled)

28. (currently amended)   A pattern inspection method comprising the steps of:

attaining a digital image of an object substrate through microscopic observation thereof;

detecting defects of a pattern formed on said object substrate by comparing said digital image with a reference image stored in a memory while masking a pre-registered region or a pattern matching with a pre-registered pattern in which the pre-registered region or the pre-registered pattern is inputted and displayed on a display screen; and

~~outputting an~~ displaying on the display screen an actual image of a defect among the defects detected together with display on the display screen of positional distribution data ~~thereof~~ of the defects detected on said object substrate ~~on a display screen~~ in a map format.

29. (currently amended)   A pattern inspection method as claimed in claim 28,

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wherein the pre-registered region or pre-registered pattern is a region or pattern which has been ~~set up~~ inputted using the digital image attained through microscopic observation of the object substrate.

Claim 30 (canceled)

31. (currently amended)   A pattern inspection method comprising the steps of:

attaining ~~obtaining~~ a digital image of an object substrate through microscopic observation thereof;

detecting defects of a pattern formed on said object substrate by comparing said digital image with a reference image stored in a memory; and

displaying data on the defects detected on a display screen and displaying an inputted pre-registered feature on the display screen;

wherein, at the step of displaying, a positional distribution of the defects on said object substrate is displayed on the display screen in a map format together with display on the screen of an enlarged actual image of a defect among the defects detected, the positional distribution being displayed by excluding defects having a feature that matches with a the pre-registered feature or distinguishing from defects which do not have a feature that matches with the pre-registered feature.

32. (currently amended)   A pattern inspection method as claimed in claim 31, wherein the pre-registered feature is a feature which has been ~~set up~~ inputted using the digital image ~~attained~~ obtained through microscopic observation of the object substrate.

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Claim 33 (canceled)

34. (currently amended)   A pattern inspection method comprising the steps of:

obtaining a digital image of an object substrate through microscopic

observation thereof;

detecting defects of a pattern formed on said object substrate by comparing

said digital image with a reference image stored in a memory; ~~and~~

~~outputting~~ inputting and displaying on a display screen a pre-registered

region, a pre-registered configuration or pre-registered feature quantity of the object

substrate; and

displaying on the display screen data of the defects detected including a

position on said object substrate ~~and an~~ in a map format together with display on the

display screen of an enlarged actual image of a defect among the detected defects;

wherein, at the step of ~~outputting~~ displaying, data regarding defects located in

a pre-registered region, or data having a pattern that matches with a pre-registered

configuration or pre-registered feature quantity is ~~output~~ displayed so as to be

distinguishable from data regarding an other detected defect.

35. (currently amended)   A pattern inspection method as claimed in claim 34,

wherein at least one of the pre-registered region, pre-registered configuration

and pre-registered feature quantity data is a factor which has been ~~set up~~ inputted

using the digital image obtained through microscopic observation of the object

substrate.

Claim 36 (canceled)

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37. (previously presented) A pattern inspection method as claimed in claim 34,

wherein feature quantity data of each defect contains at least one kind of data including defect position data, projection length data, area data, and shape data.

38. (currently amended)   A pattern inspection method comprising the steps of:

attaining obtaining a digital image of an object substrate through microscopic observation thereof;

detecting candidate defects by processing the attained obtained digital image;

extracting defects from the detected candidate defects by excluding candidate defects located in a predefined region on the object substrate or having a pattern that matches with a pre-registered pattern which is inputted and displayed on a display screen;

displaying an actual image of a defect among the extracted defects on a the display screen together with display on the display screen of positional distribution data on the object substrate in a map format and feature quantity data thereof;

classifying the defect which image is displayed on said the display screen; and

outputting class data of the classified defect together with feature quantity data thereof.

39. (previously presented) A pattern inspection method as claimed in claim 38,

wherein the class data of each of the classified defects is displayed on the display screen together with an image thereof.

40. (previously presented) A pattern inspection method as claimed in claim 38,

wherein a digital image of each of the detected candidate defects is stored,

and a judgment for extracting defects from the detected candidate defects is carried

out by using the stored digital image of each of the detected candidate defects.

41. (previously presented) A pattern inspection method as claimed in claim 38,

wherein the feature quantity data of each of the extracted defects is displayed

on a CAD terminal.

42. (previously presented) A pattern inspection method as claimed in claim 38,

wherein the feature quantity data of each of the extracted defects is displayed

or printed together with CAD data thereof.